[Translation]

Indo-Poland Agreement

251. SHRI SUKH LAL KUSHWAHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether an Agreement has been signed recently between India and Poland regarding discussion on capital investment, cultural exchange and foreign policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) An Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments, a Programme of Cultural and Educational Exchanges for the years 1997-99 and a Protocol of Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, were signed on 7th October 1996 between India and Poland during the visit of Hon'ble President of India to Poland.

(b) *(i) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland for the Promotion and Protection of Investments :*

Signed by Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri S.R. Bommai, and Polish Foreign Minister, Mr. Dariusz Rosati, it provides for mutual guarantees for protection of investments, repatriation of profits and a dispute settlement mechanism.

(ii) *Programme of Cultural and Educational Exchanges between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Poland for the years of 1997-99 :*

Signed by Minister for Human Resource Development, Shri S.R. Bommai, and Polish Foreign Minister, Mr. Dariusz Rosati, the Programme provides for cooperation and exchanges in culture and arts, advanced learning and education, mass media and sports.

(iii) *Protocol of Consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland :*

Signed by Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, and the Vice Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, the Protocol provides for regular biennial consultations between the Foreign Ministries of India and Poland covering bilateral relations and topics of mutual interest.

[English]

Settingup of National Sports Development Fund

252. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have proposal to set up National Sports Development Fund for promotion of sports activities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details regarding present status of the proposal; and

(d) the other services being formulated for development of sports in the next five years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is a proposal to create a National Sports Development Fund to mobilize additional resources for promotion of sports and games in the country and for achieving excellence at the international level. The proposal has not yet been finalized.

(d) In addition to the existing schemes, various new schemes, have been incorporated in the Ninth Plan proposals for the promotion of sports and games in the country and for achieving excellence at international level. These include scheme for training of elite sportspersons, scheme for inter-school tournaments at various levels, a special scheme for the North-Eastern region etc.

Passport Rackets

253. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the report appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated December 15 & 16, 1996 regarding a well organised racket in forged passports run by travel agents having links in Rajasthan, Delhi and Mumbai;

(b) whether some of the travel agents are in collusion with the officials of Regional Passport Offices and they have their touts even in middle east countries; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government to unearth such passport rackets and the results achieved so far ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) The Government has seen the news item in the Indian Express of December 15 & 16, 1996.

(b) The Passport Office, Jaipur, was asked to inquire, through the State Government and police agencies, into the allegations made in the news report since these pertained primarily to Rajasthan. The inquiry did not establish any link between the touts and officials of the Passport Office.

(c) All specific complaints regarding malpractices in Passport Offices are immediately inquired into and appropriate remedial action taken.